Family Maze #3

by Marta Matsuo

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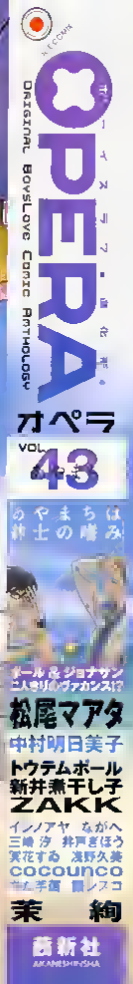

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click
click
bip
creak

PAUL
WHY DID YOU LIE TO MOTHER LIKE THAT?
BECAUSE
BECAUSE IF I TOLD HER THE TRUTH, SHE WOULD NEVER FORGIVE ME
.....
MAYBE.
BUT
HOW MUCH IS THE LIE YOU TOLD HER GOING TO HURT HER?

To tell the truth, I was far from sharing my older brother's childlike ideals of honesty
PAUL,
IF YOU DO YOUR BEST TO BE HONEST, PEOPLE WILL REPAY YOU WITH UNDERSTANDING
AS YOU GO THROUGH LIFE, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOVE ALL IS TO BE HONEST
BESIDES
BY TELLING THIS LIE, YOU YOURSELF WILL BE WOUNDED MANY TIMES OVER.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
DO YOU LOVE MOTHER AND FATHER?
OF COURSE I DO.
I thought them far too pure, but...
WELL, LET'S GO IT'S BEEN A YEAR SINCE I'VE HAD MOTHER'S CRANBERRY PIE.
Still, I loved David,
And I respected him
WELL, WILL YOU SWEAR NOT TO LIE TO THEM AGAIN?
YEAH. I SWEAR

And because of that,
I believed those words of his
I planned to tell my parents everything
But what I did know was that
Telling the truth would hurt people
HEY,
JONATHAN?

Paul reminisces. He wasn't able to be honest like the brother who left home for the sake of his own truth.

N.O.
W.A.Y.
NO!!!!
2000 PESOS
NO!!!!
500
500!!
2000 PESOS
AND SO I GOT RIPPED OFF BY THE TAXI DRIVER!!!
THEN YOU CRASHED IN THE TAXI ON THE WAY FROM THE AIRPORT.
S-Sorry
Bam
Bam
NOT AFTER YOU SPENT A WHOLE HOUR MONOPOLIZING THE TOILET ON THE AIRPLANE WHILE THROWING UP!
are you re-all feeser right?
Line
Vein pop
BESIDES,
TOMORROW IS YOUR BROTHER'S WEDDING, RIGHT? TO HIS SAME-SEX PARTNER?
BUT BOTH TIMES, YOU LOOKED AFTER ME
I DON'T WANT TO GO THROUGH ANYTHING LIKE THAT AGAIN
Hahaha

I'LL BE FINE.
DON'T GET DRUNK TWO DAYS IN A ROW UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.
KIND OF FEELS LIKE BEING SCOLDED BY MY MOTHER...
FOR ONE THING, HE HASN'T EVEN CALLED.
?
HUUUH?!
ARE YOU TELLING ME... YOU WEREN'T INVITED?
ARE YOU BY ANY CHANCE CRASHING THIS WEDDING?!
MY MOTHER HIRED A DETECTIVE TO FIND HIS WHEREABOUTS. HE WAS LOCATED, AND IT SEEMS SHE CONTACTED HIM
BUT THERE WAS NO RES-PONSE
SO... YOU'RE REALLY GOING TO JUST BARGE IN...?
WELL,
SOMETHING LIKE THAT

BARGE IN?!
IT'LL BE GOOD IF I CAN SWING IT...
HOW-EVER, THE QUESTION IS, WILL I BE ABLE TO SNEAK IN BEFORE THE CEREMONY STARTS?
Huh?
SECURITY?
WELL, THEY TOLD MY MOTHER IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE.
SECURITY WILL PROBABLY BE TIGHT.

SOUNDS LIKE HE DOESN'T WANT TO SEE HIS BROTHER
HE'S MAKING EXCUSES
OH.
GO AHEAD AND GO BACK TO THE ROOM
I'M GOING TO USE THE SHOWER AT THE POOL.
HUH? BUT WHY?
I'D LIKE TO SHOWER ALONE!
OUR ROOM HAS A FABULOUS BATHROOM
Wink☆
FINE.
I'LL WAIT PATIENTLY FOR YOUR RETURN.
IN BED.
stalk stalk stalk
I SHOULD'VE LET HIM DRINK HIMSELF UNDER THE TABLE...
OH...! HE IGNORED ME!!

SO THE PROFESSOR PLANNED TO COME OUT ALL THOSE YEARS AGO...
ANYWAY...
HE SURPRISED ME BY BEING SO THOUGHTFUL OF OTHERS...
BUT THEN, HE GAVE UP ON THAT IDEA...
VWOOOOOO—
WELL,
THE REAL PROBLEM IS WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TONIGHT
SSSSh
SCRUB
SCRUB
SCRUB
SCRUB
SCRUB
IN THAT RESPECT, HIS BROTHER HAS ALREADY SURPASSED HIM.

Oh...
!
slip
crack
Whee
Hey!
THE FLOOR IS OVER-POLISHED?!
GLASSES, GLASSES...
THIS IS THE KIND OF SITUATION
YOU WOULDN'T EVEN SEE IN MANGA THESE DAYS!
I can't see!
SAY...
WOULD
THESE BE YOURS
BY SOME CHANCE?

Ah!
YES!
THEY ARE!
BE CAREFUL.

HEY...? HAVEN'T I SEEN THAT GUY SOMEWHERE BEFORE...?
STEFAN!
HURRY UP!
ALL RIGHT.
I'M COMING
SEE YOU AROUND
.....
ENJOY YOUR HOLIDAY!

open
...
OH! HE'S BACK...
PROFES-SOR?
I'M BACK

WELCOME BACK, JONATHAN
I'VE KEPT THE BED WARM FOR YOU.
heh heh hee
OH..?
What?
WHAT AN UNEXPECTED REACTION
PROFESSOR HASKINS'
IS IT POSSIBLE MY WISHES WILL BE FULFILLED..?
WHO DO YOU THINK I RAN INTO AT THE POOL JUST NOW?

THE MOVIE STAR!
STEFAN MILLS!
COME ON!
?
HE WAS RIDICULOUSLY COOL!
HE HAD THE LEADING ROLE IN THE MOVIE I SAW WITH EVAN THE OTHER DAY!
MAYBE YOU DON'T REALLY CARE FOR MOVIES, BUT
OH,

HE'S EVEN COOLER THAN ON SCREEN!
BUT ACTUALLY, IN REAL LIFE...
A REAL GENTLE-MAN...
.....
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM..?
At half mast
LOOKS LIKE A BUDDHA STATUE...

SMACK
I'M GOING TO SLEEP ON THE LIVING ROOM SOFA.
JONATHAN.
GOOD NIGHT!
.....
WHAT'S WRONG?
DID I DO SOME-THING...?
PROFES-SOR!
Peek

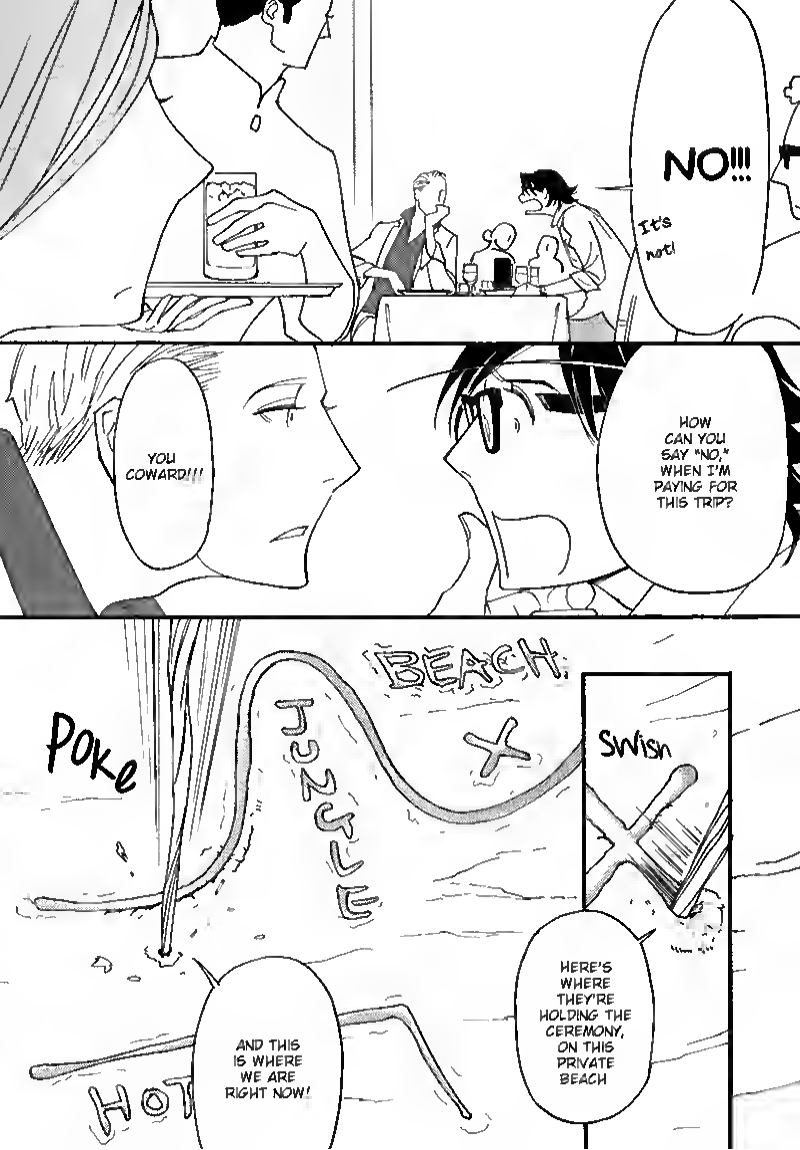
THE MAN YOU MET AT THE POOL
IS MY BROTHER
HUH?!
"STEFAN MILLS" IS A STAGE NAME.
HIS REAL NAME IS DAVID ERNEST HASKINS,
BUT YOU WON'T READ THAT IN WIKIPEDIA!!!
For your information
FOR
REAL
!?
MY LONG ABSENT OLDER BROTHER... SOMEHOW WAS A HOLLYWOOD STAR WHEN HE RESURFACED.
AND FURTHERMORE HE'S SUCH A HUNK THAT HIS EVERYDAY COOLNESS GOT YOU ALL EXCITED.
YOU'D THINK AS HIS YOUNGER BROTHER, I'D BE PROUD.

ER...
SO...
IN OTHER WORDS...
He's real cute.
OH, YOU'RE COOL, TOO!
OH, YOU'RE NOT COOL "TOO." YOU'RE COOLER!
IT DOESN'T MAKE ME HAPPY IF I HAVE TO FORCE YOU TO SAY SO
Thus, peace was restored for one night
BUT SOMEHOW IT'S NOT VERY CLEAR CUT...

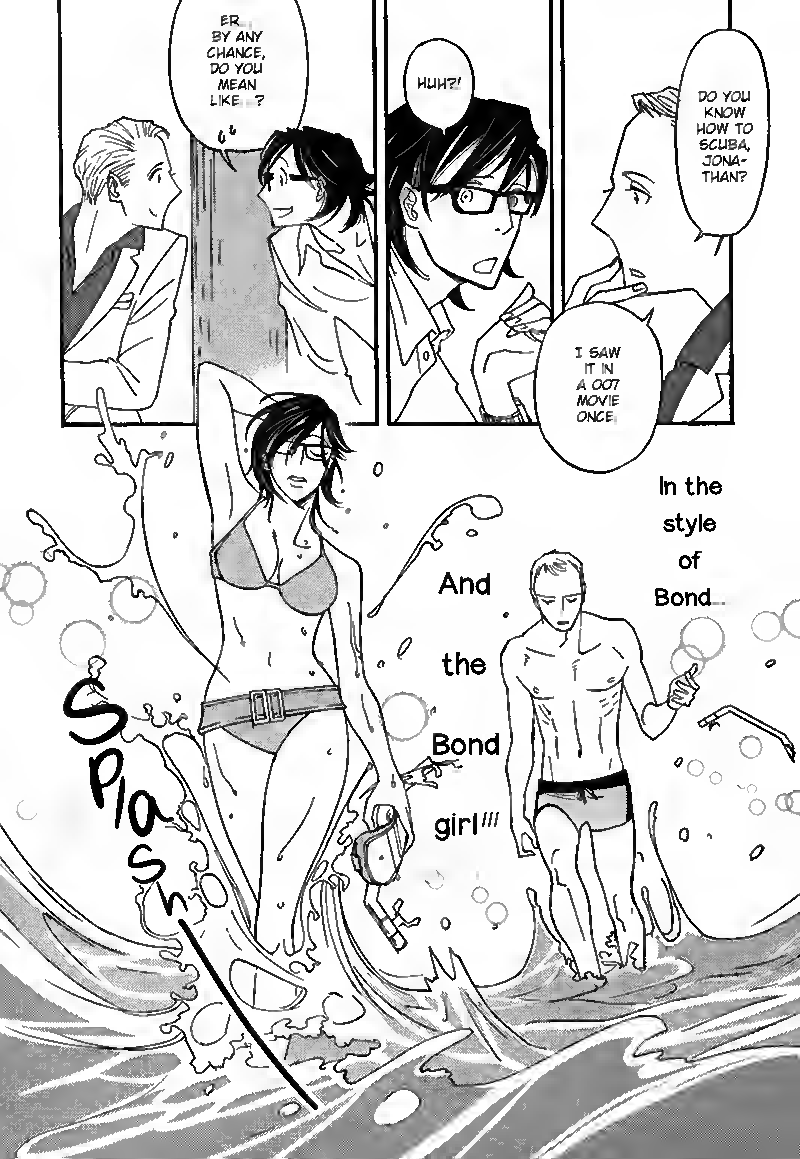
PROFES-
SOR!
SO THIS IS WHERE YOU WERE!
I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU.
YOU WEREN'T AROUND WHEN I GOT UP...
HAVE A LOOK, JONATHAN.

UH... THERE?
ON THE BEACH.
THEY'RE GETTING READY FOR THE WEDDING.
THE STAFF ARE REALLY BUSY.
OH, THEY'LL BE HOLDING THE CEREMONY ON THAT PIER?
JONATHAN,
I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.
WE'RE GOING TO INTERFERE WITH THE WEDDING.

WHAT UNEXPECTEDLY SENSIBLE ADVICE, COMING FROM YOU.
Good Heavens!
He's American, so how does he know that saying?
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
WAIT...
ISN'T THIS A CASE OF "INTERFERE WITH LOVE, GET KICKED TO DEATH BY A HORSE?"*
*JAPANESE SAYING
WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU GOING TO DO TO INTERFERE?
BESIDES,
BUT WHICH ONE IS THE BRIDE, I WONDER?
YE~ES
PRECISELY
KIDNAP THE BRIDE, OR WHAT?
Like in the movie "The Graduate"
I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO AGREE WITH ME
Isn't that your forte?
YOU MARCH RIGHT INTO THE WEDDING SAYING YOU'RE DAVID'S LOVER. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?
JONATHAN, YOU'RE THE OTHER MAN.
THAT'S JUST THE TRICK!
THAT'S IT!


NO!!!
It's not!
HOW CAN YOU SAY "NO," WHEN I'M PAYING FOR THIS TRIP?
YOU COWARD!!!
BEACH
JUNGLE
Poke
Swish
HERE'S WHERE THEY'RE HOLDING THE CEREMONY, ON THIS PRIVATE BEACH
AND THIS IS WHERE WE ARE RIGHT NOW!

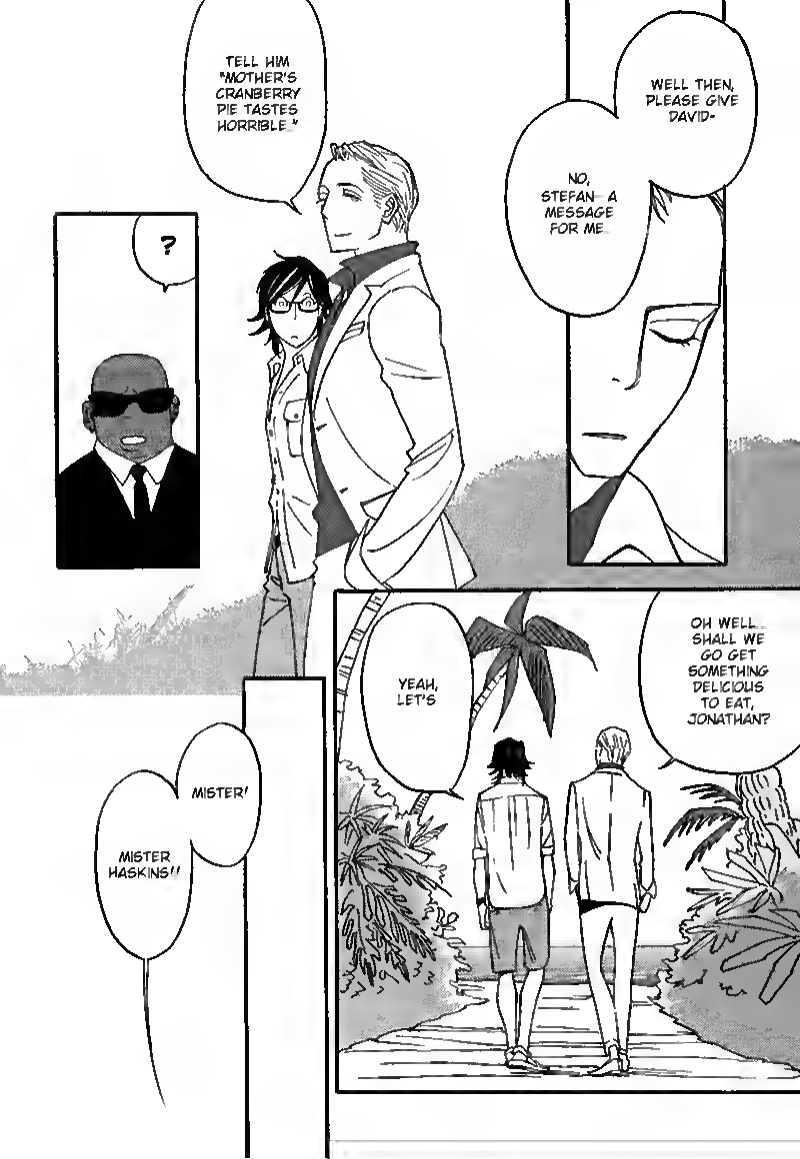
I CONFIRMED ON MY MORNING WALK ALL THE PLACES WHERE THEY HAVE PLACED BRAWNY SECURITY GUARDS.
GETTING THERE BY LAND WILL PROVE QUITE DIFFICULT.
THERE'S A SINGLE TRAIL LEADING FROM THE JUNGLE ONTO THE PRIVATE BEACH
SO...
BY SEA?
THAT'S WHAT I'M THINKING


DO YOU KNOW HOW TO SCUBA, JONATHAN?
I SAW IT IN A 007 MOVIE ONCE.
HUH?!
ER... BY ANY CHANCE, DO YOU MEAN LIKE...?
In the style of Bond...
And the Bond girl!!!
SPlash

Impossible!
Impos-sible!
MAYBE HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO SWIM...?
IMPOS-SIBLE!
DEFIN-ITELY NOT GONNA HAPPEN!
IS THERE ANY WAY I CAN GET HIM OFF THIS WAY OF THINKING?
CAN'T BE HELPED, I GUESS
I'M VERY SORRY, BUT OURS HAVE ALL BEEN BOOKED...
Then we can join a snorkeling cruise!
THEY'RE ALREADY ALL OUT FOR THE DAY
THERE MUST BE SOMEPLACE WE CAN RENT ONE
THEN WHAT ABOUT A JET SKI OR SOMETHING?
HOW SUSPI-CIOUS!!!
I DON'T SEE ANYONE RIDING JET SKIS!

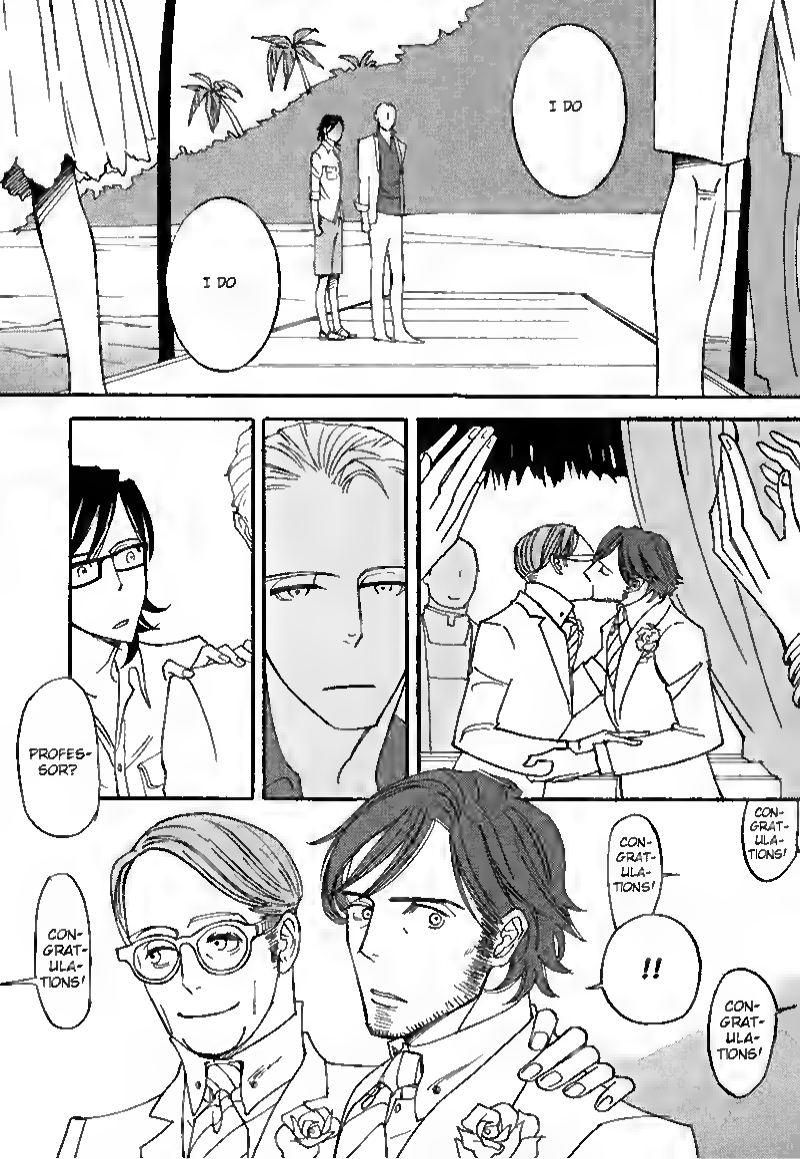
OH!
PAPA-RAZZI PREVEN-TION!
NATURALLY, HOLLYWOOD STARS DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY, HUH?
HEY, PROFES-SOR
I WAS THINKING, HOW DID YOU WANDER OFF THE PATH OF HONESTY AND DECENCY?
BECAUSE
THERE ARE NO LIES BETWEEN TRUE BROTHERS.

THAT'S TRUE...
Lit-tle bro-ther ...?
UNFORTU-NATELY, YOU'RE THE 21ST BROTHER TODAY.
PLEASE LEAVE...
BUT I'M THE REAL THING! HERE'S MY PASSPORT!
Have a look!
THAT'S GREAT. NOW LEAVE...
.....


TELL HIM "MOTHER'S CRANBERRY PIE TASTES HORRIBLE."
?
WELL THEN, PLEASE GIVE DAVID-
NO, STEFAN- A MESSAGE FOR ME.
YEAH, LET'S
OH WELL... SHALL WE GO GET SOMETHING DELICIOUS TO EAT, JONATHAN?
MISTER!
MISTER HASKINS!!

IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH, TO LOVE AND TO CHERISH...

I'M SORRY, THE CEREMONY HAS ALREADY STARTED...
BUT COME WITH ME...
TO HAVE AND TO HOLD,
AS LONG AS YOU BOTH SHALL LIVE
DO YOU PROMISE TO BE FAITHFUL?


I DO
I DO
PROFES-SOR?
CON-GRAT-ULA-TIONS!
CON-GRAT-ULA-TIONS!
!!
CON-GRAT-ULA-TIONS!
CON-GRAT-ULA-TIONS!

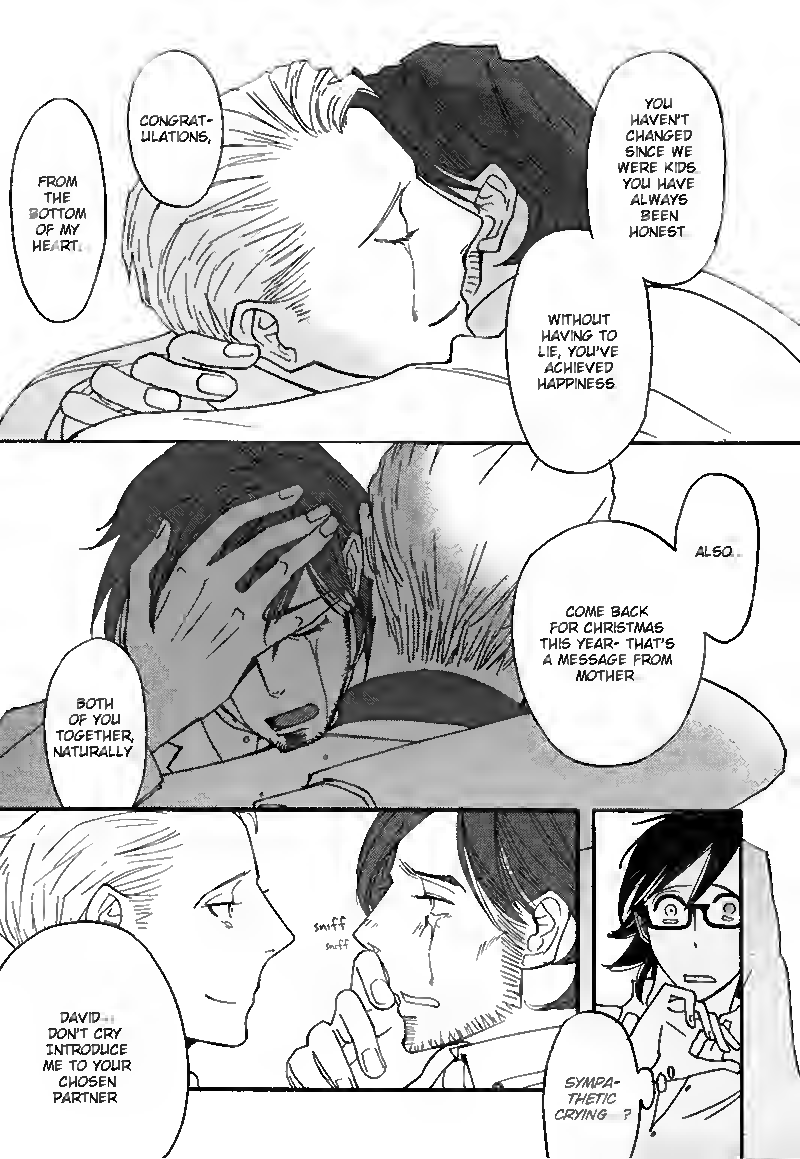
STEFAN?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

IF WE'RE GONNA GO, LET'S GO NOW!
HE'S COMING THIS WAY!
JONATHAN, WHAT DO I DO?
PAUL...
IS THAT YOU?

YO,
BIG BROTHER.
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME,
BUT YOU'VE HARDLY CHANGED.
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
YOU CAME!
OF COURSE I DID. YOU'RE IMPORTANT TO ME.
AND I ALSO BROUGHT AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE.
ER... WHEN SHOULD I ANNOUNCE MYSELF AS THE EX?
I mean, am I ### supposed to...?

PAUL
DAVID

CONGRAT-
ULATIONS
ON YOUR
MARRIAGE.


YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED SINCE WE WERE KIDS. YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HONEST.
CONGRAT-ULATIONS,
FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.
WITHOUT HAVING TO LIE, YOU'VE ACHIEVED HAPPINESS.
ALSO...
COME BACK FOR CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR- THAT'S A MESSAGE FROM MOTHER.
BOTH OF YOU TOGETHER, NATURALLY.
sniff
sniff
DAVID... DON'T CRY. INTRODUCE ME TO YOUR CHOSEN PARTNER.
SYMPA-THETIC CRYING...?

BY THE WAY
THE PERSON BEHIND YOU...
THANKS FOR TAKING GOOD CARE OF DAVID.
OH, THAT FILM! I SAW IT- IT WAS SPLENDID!
PLEASED TO MEET YOU
HE'S THE SCREENWRITER WHO WROTE THE SCRIPT FOR THE LOST SIRENS, THAT I STARRED IN.
GRAHAM CARNEY
ER HE'S...
!
I MET YOU LAST NIGHT, DIDN'T I?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE PAUL'S COMPANION.
THAT... HOW CAN I SAY IT...?

MY ONLY REASON FOR BEING HERE IS TO GIVE YOU THEIR GREETINGS... WHICH I HOPE YOU'LL ACCEPT.
MY SINCERE CONGRATU-LATIONS
PAUL HAS A WONDERFUL WIFE AND CHILD WHO COULDN'T BE HERE.
JUST LET ME SAY...
DON'T MISUNDERSTAND. WE ARE SIMPLY FRIENDS.
THANK YOU... BOTH OF YOU.

THAT'S TOTALLY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE ARRANGED EARLIER, ISN'T IT, JONATHAN?
SAME GOES FOR YOU, PROFESSOR!!
.....

LEAVING THAT ASIDE, WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER...
ABOUT US BEING FRIENDS...
WHERE IN HELL DID YOU GET THAT FROM?
!
TELLING THAT LIE TO PUNISH ME,
WHEN I PAID THE EXPENSES FOR THIS TRIP...
IT'S KIND OF PITIFUL...
SO, WHILE WE'RE HERE, I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU MY LOVER

◆ Family Maze #3／おわり ◆